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(54) **Method and apparatus for transferring a substrate carrier**

(57) In a first aspect, a first method is provided for electronic device manufacturing. The first method includes the steps of (1) receiving a request to transfer a carrier from a first substrate loading station to a second substrate loading station of an electronic device manufacturing facility including a plurality of substrate loading stations (115; 511-515), wherein the facility further includes a plurality of carrier supports (110; 503) coupled to a conveyor system (101; 501) adapted to move the

carrier within the facility; (2) assigning one of the plurality of carrier supports to transfer the carrier from the first substrate loading station to the second substrate loading station such that at least one of a time required for the transfer is reduced and balance of the conveyor system is maintained; (3) moving the carrier from the first substrate loading station; and (4) moving the carrier to the second substrate loading station. Numerous other aspects are provided.

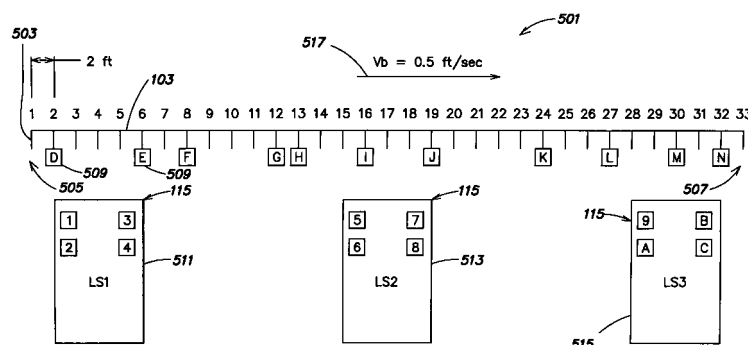


FIG. 5



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 7 February 2006	Examiner Angermeier, D
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
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